



Coastal District Enforceable Policies

Alaska Coastal Management Program Web Site: <http://www.alaskacoast.state.ak.us>

Municipality of Anchorage Coastal Management Program Enforceable Policies

Effective Dates:

June 22, 1981

Municipality of Anchorage Coastal Management Program and Areas Which Merit Special Attention become effective for State, federal, and local implementation.

May, 1982

Municipality of Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan becomes effective for State, federal, and local implementation.

April 29, 1996

Revised Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan becomes effective.

Preservation Environment

Class I Waters

1. Prohibit discharge of pollutants into these waters.
2. Discourage dredging and fill in these areas.
3. Ensure that State water quality standards are not violated.
4. Prohibit those uses that would create, cause or result in decreased water quality.
5. Establish stormwater run-off, sedimentation, and erosion controls sufficient to prevent water quality degradation.

Selected Coastal and Upland Marshes and Wetlands (Includes Preservation Freshwater Wetlands)

1. Discourage development in these areas, except in cases shown by assessment of all pertinent factors to be not contrary to the public interest and where no alternative areas exist. In coastal and freshwater marshes and wetlands designated as critical habitat areas in the Anchorage CMP or WMP (see maps in Chapter 4), no development shall be permitted.
2. Recognize and consider the natural values of coastal or freshwater marshes and wetlands (as identified in Anchorage WMP) and provide for their protection in resource planning and project review.
3. Ensure maintenance and protection of natural functions and values through regulation of coastal systems.
4. Avoid or minimize, any identified adverse impacts to coastal or freshwater marshes and wetlands (as identified in Anchorage WMP) from public works activities such as transportation projects and utility, sewer and drainage activities.
5. Ensure that local, state and federal permits for dredging and/or filling of wetlands within the Anchorage Coastal Boundary comply with all applicable provisions of the Anchorage Coastal Management Plan (the consistency review process).
6. Use appropriate mitigation techniques as specified in the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan in wetlands identified for development to the maximum extent practicable.
7. Protect natural functions and values identified for freshwater marshes and wetlands as indicated in the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan.

Tidal Flats (Includes Tidal Creeks, Mudflats, and/or Estuarine Beaches)

1. Discourage development in tidal flats, estuaries, beaches, and tidal creeks, except in areas designated suitable for water-dependent uses, providing all activities shall to the extent possible avoid or minimize any adverse impacts.

2. Protect recreational and environmental values of estuarine beaches in resource planning and project review.

Saltwater Marshes

1. Discourage development in saltwater marshes, except in areas designated suitable for water-dependent uses, providing all activities shall, to the extent possible, avoid or minimize any adverse impacts.
2. Protect recreational and environmental values of saltwater marshes in resource planning and project review.

Coastal Habitats

1. Preserve coastal habitat areas in their natural state and preclude any development in areas so identified, and provide buffers around these areas as necessary to maintain the natural qualities necessary to critical habitats.
2. Prohibit commercial, industrial or residential use.
3. Limit public use and recreational development of these areas to the extent compatible with the purpose for which critical habitat areas are established.
4. Ensure that development activities adjacent to coastal habitat areas do not detract from the values sought to be preserved.

Coastal Bluffs/Cliffs

1. Prevent new construction that would threaten the stability of the coastal bluff environment.

2. Maintain vegetation in its natural state to prevent slope degradation.
3. Provide for construction setback from coastal bluffs.

Hazardous Lands

1. Discourage development in areas designated “high hazard.”
2. Encourage the Municipality to adopt adequate regulations and ordinances in these areas.
3. Require the use of central sewage systems and engineering specifications sufficient to mitigate potential loss of life and property.
4. Assure that all appropriate precautions are taken during design, construction, and landscape modifications to reduce the effects of the hazard.

Historical/Prehistorical/Archaeological Sites and Natural Areas

1. Protect these areas, where possible through the application of local zoning, tax incentives, purchase, easements or other appropriate means.
2. Ensure that any development in natural areas incorporates special precautions and design criteria to avoid damaging the character of the feature.
3. Identify and preserve all significant sites not already protected by federal or state programs.
4. Ensure that prior to any proposed land modification activities, project sponsors/applicants shall contact the appropriate local and state government agencies regarding exact location of sites (which shall be protected) and shall plan all use and activities so as not to destroy, alter, remove or infringe upon any such sites.

5. Identify and set aside unique or fragile areas as special natural areas for the purpose of educational research, study and for the enjoyment of the public.

Coastal Flood Zone

1. Prohibit uses, other than passive recreation, sightseeing, hiking, and viewing or other activities that will not alter, endanger or destroy fish and wildlife species or habitat, in the coastal flood zone identified by the State Department of Fish and Game as “Critical Coastal Habitat.”
2. Prohibit development within the coastal flood zone except those uses which are water-dependent and water-related.
3. Prohibit residential uses in the coastal flood zone.
4. Require an environmental assessment (at a minimum), to be prepared by the project applicant, for water-dependent and water-related uses and activities in order to identify potential problems associated with such uses and activities. Mitigation plans must be prepared and accepted by the Municipality for each identified problem or adverse impact prior to the issuance of a permit by the Municipality, the State of Alaska, or the Federal Government.

CONSERVATION ENVIRONMENT

Class II Waters

1. Assure that uses and activities in or adjacent to Class II Waters do not degrade the water quality or cause violation of State and Federal water quality standards.
2. Prohibit dredging in Class II Waters except for maintenance dredging or other projects specifically exempt from regulation.

Class III Waters (Recreation)

1. Apply the Class II Waters policies to Class III Waters where waters and water bodies identified as suitable for recreational purposes or currently utilized for such purposes coincide with Class II Waters.
2. Avoid pollution of Class III Waters and ensure that present water quality is not degraded below applicable water quality standards.
3. Allow traditional public uses of these areas, such as fishing, hunting, boating, and swimming.
4. Permit construction of docks and piers for boats and aircraft, provided such construction and subsequent use does not cause adverse impacts to the fishery resources and water quality.

Scenic Corridors, Areas and Vistas

1. Identify, designate, and safeguard areas that provide and offer important viewing opportunities and provide interpretive signs where appropriate.
2. Incorporate in the State Department of Transportation highway planning process, provisions for allowing pullouts at sites designated by the Municipality for scenic and viewing purposes.
3. Require, if deemed appropriate by the Municipality, design criteria and performance standards for developments adjacent to scenic corridors in order to maintain a high aesthetic appeal and to prevent unsightly and incompatible development.
4. Provide nature trails, where appropriate, along the coastal bluff areas for viewing opportunities, nature study, photography, hiking, and other passive recreational purposes.

Park & Recreation Areas

1. Acquire typical portions of the Municipality for the public to utilize and enjoy without depleting them.
2. Discourage incompatible development within or adjacent to these areas.
3. Encourage landowners to retain in an undeveloped condition those lands which have the potential for recreational use.

Marginal Lands

1. Require careful site planning before development of marginal lands takes place because of the wide range of problems associated with development.
2. Ensure that development of marginal lands areas is not injurious to the public's health, safety, and welfare.
3. Utilize, where feasible, in development of marginal lands, central sewerage collection and treatment facilities and, where not feasible, on-site facilities shall be designed so as not to cause conditions that will pollute surface and subsurface waters.

River Floodplains

1. Discourage development in the 100 Year Floodplain, except for those uses which require water access that can be designed safely to prevent damage and loss, in order to avoid the need for later attempts to protect such investments through construction of flood control structures at public expense.
2. Federal and State agencies and Municipal departments shall conduct their activities in a way that manages and prevents erosion, retards runoff, and protects the natural functions and values of the floodplain.
3. Consider channel improvement projects intended to provide flood protection

only after they have been reviewed by appropriate Federal, State and Municipal agencies and it has been determined that land treatment and all feasible floodwater retarding structures will not provide an adequate level of flood protection.

4. Carry out channel improvements for flood protection with minimum loss and destruction of fish and wildlife habitats and with minimum alteration of and damage to riparian vegetation.

Open Space

1. Identify, assess and maximize open space values in Municipal planning and project review.
2. Design new developments to conserve the natural landscape, and include sufficient open space by legal means that will guarantee its remaining open space in perpetuity.
3. Ensure that adequate open space is provided within the framework of an individual subdivision and at the neighborhood, community, and regional level.

UTILIZATION ENVIRONMENT

Class IV Waters

1. Ensure that State water quality standards are not violated by uses and activities in or adjacent to Class IV Waters.
2. Take all practical measures in order to prevent further degradation of Class IV Waters (Upper Cook Inlet) because the general low quality of these waters poses potential health hazard as well as a hazard to adjacent water resources.

3. Prevent the introduction into Class IV Waters of any present or future industrial contaminants (resulting from mining activities, port facilities, waterborne transportation, energy facilities, fish processing facilities, etc.) or other deleterious substances in amounts to render such water unsuitable for fish survival, industrial cooling, or industrial process watering supply purposes.

Urban Residential

1. Enact and enforce effective municipal zoning and subdivision regulations, and building codes.
2. Guide residential development into suitable areas through municipal planning and project review.
3. Allow flexibility in the techniques used to achieve the desired goals of local government to the extent possible with regulations that are performance-orientated rather than means-oriented.
4. Plan residential developments in accordance with the natural characteristics of the land taking into consideration slope, elevation, drainage patterns, natural vegetation, and accessibility.
5. Encourage maximum retention of green areas and open space.
6. Control runoff from streets, residential construction sites, and yards in order to prevent flooding in adjacent areas, and to prevent erosion, soil loss, siltation, and/or pollution of water bodies.
7. Permit only that vegetation removal necessary for construction of residential structures; no clear-cutting of natural vegetation shall be permitted.
8. Require residential building and development setbacks of at least 50 feet from the shoreline of all water bodies.

9. Ensure that location and timing of new development in areas identified as urban residential is in accordance with the ability of local government to provide and maintain necessary services such as streets, solid waste disposal, water supplies, schools, police and fire protection.

Urban Development

1. Apply all applicable policies relating to uses and activities listed in this chapter and as identified in the ACMP.

Urban Waterfront

1. Ensure that location and timing of new development in urban water front areas is in accordance with the ability of local government to provide and maintain necessary services for proper operation and maintenance.
2. Ensure that development in these areas shall utilize adequate environmental safeguards.
3. Ensure that urban water-front development is compatible with the physical environment through the adoption of effective municipal controls.
4. Give priority consideration to water-dependent activities.
5. Prohibit any use or activity which would result in direct and significant environmental impacts until such adverse impacts can be mitigated.

Rural

1. Allow and provide for low density development that is compatible with the environment and can meet the goals and policies of such

environments.

2. Recognize the dual suitability of these areas in municipal planning and project review.
3. Establish effective controls in local plans to ensure that development in these areas is compatible with the physical environment.
4. Remove only that natural vegetation necessary for the actual on-site construction, maintain the area in as natural a state as possible, and maintain it according to the purposes of its classification. (If the rural environmental area overlaps into another environmental classification or resource policy unit, the other resource policy unit policies shall also apply).
5. Ensure that the location and timing of rural development is in accordance with the Municipality's ability to provide and maintain necessary services such as streets, water, sewer, schools, police, and fire protection, through the implementation of local land use controls.

Municipality of Anchorage Coastal Zone Boundaries

The Municipality of Anchorage amended the state's interim coastal zone boundaries in the Anchorage Bowl and Eagle River areas. The boundary for these areas is depicted on the enclosed maps. Along the Knik River the coastal zone boundary is the 400-foot elevation contour. Along Turnagain Arm the coastal zone boundary is the 1,000-foot elevation contour. In eastern portions of the municipality the coastal zone boundary includes the timberline of the Sitka spruce/hemlock coastal forest, slopes contiguous with marine waters where mass wasting is evident or likely to occur, and unvegetated areas left by receding glaciers where the coastal forest is likely to invade. All marine waters within the municipality are included in the coastal zone.

The coastal zone boundary line depicted on the enclosed maps is not entirely accurate, because some areas which meet the boundary criteria are not included. The boundary criteria in the Anchorage Bowl and Eagle river areas are: (1) a baseline measured 1,320 feet horizontally from the inland extent of coastal flooding (100-year coastal flood), (2) all lakes, bogs, marshes, swamps, floodplains and areas with natural hazards, water recharge value, recreation, scenic, or biological values that are intersected by the baseline, and (3) all rivers and streams which intersect the baseline up to the 1,000-foot elevation contour and extending to the limit of the 100-year floodplain or 200 feet on either side of the channel midline, whichever is greater. Hood Lake, Lake Spenard, and their tributaries, for instance, are in the coastal zone.

The Anchorage CMP provides for consistency reviews of uses and activities located outside of the coastal zone boundary that may have spillover impacts. Any use or activity located up to the 1,000-foot elevation contour which is anticipated to have a direct and significant impact on coastal resources within the coastal zone must be consistent with the requirements of the ACMP standards and guidelines (6 AAC 80 and 6 AAC 85).

Applicants and permittees may need to refer to the larger scale, 1:6,000 wetland maps used to implement the Wetlands Management Plan to determine whether activities are located in the coastal zone. Site inspection or additional information from the applicant may also be desirable in some instances.